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Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2006 3:51 PM
To: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov; JUgoretz@dfg.ca.gov
Subject: MLPAComments: Impact of February 9 Carmel Bay MPA package proposals on kayak fishing

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Phillip L. Isenberg (Chair)
Blue Ribbon Task Force
MLPA Initiative
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RE: Impact of February 9 Carmel Bay MPA package proposals on kayak fishing

February 23, 2006

Dear Chairman Isenberg, Blue Ribbon Task Force Members, and Mr. Ugoretz:

I am writing on behalf of the kayak fishing community to address the recent changes to Package 2 for the Carmel Bay area. To refresh your memory, the prior iteration would have virtually eliminated kayak fishing opportunities in Monterey County.

We appreciate the attempt by the proponents of MPA Package 2 to reduce socio-economic impacts to the kayak fishing user group by altering the configuration of the MPAs they've proposed for Carmel Bay. Unfortunately the new version of Package 2 will still close off the major portion of the most popular and productive sheltered kayak fishing area in Monterey County, focusing effort on a small remaining section of rocky substrate. As far as the kayak fishing user group is concerned, the revisions to Package 2 in Carmel Bay restore fishing opportunity on the western side of Stillwater Cove. Reducing the northward extent of the Pt Lobos reserve will allow the spear diving community to retain their accustomed access at southern Carmel Pt, but it will do little to benefit the kayak fishing community. Although kayak anglers and spear divers share some of the same access and use patterns, kayak anglers tend to range farther from launch sites and fish deeper waters.

The issue remains Package Two's proposed Carmel Pinnacles SMR. The waters between Cypress and Pescadero points, including the Cypress Pinnacles area, are the kayak fishing community's major use area in Monterey County. Closing access to and west of Pescadero Pt off will severely and disproportionately impact the kayak fishing user group. It's unwarranted, because the Carmel Pinnacles SMR would be an unnecessary duplicate of the nearby Pt Lobos SMR.

Due to the heavy impacts Package Two will impose on the kayak fishing community, chiefly in Carmel Bay but also in the northern section of the Monterey Peninsula and to the Morro Bay area's Spooner's Cove in Montana de Oro State Park, the KFACA is in favor of MPA Package 1.

The Kayak Fishing Association of California (www.kfaca.org) was formerly known as the Kayak Fishing Association of Southern California. Our Central and Northern California membership has grown, and we have recently added prominent members of those areas' local kayak fishing communities to our Advisory Board. Although we've made efforts throughout the current MLPA Initiative process to communicate our usage patterns via public comment, it is clear that the other stakeholder groups have overlooked us, misunderstood our needs, or selfishly attempted to use the MLPA Initiative process to zone the ocean for the exclusive use of their stakeholder group. In the hopes of preventing these problems in the future, our small but growing community will strive to have a more active role in upcoming MLPA stakeholder panels.

Sincerely,

Paul Lebowitz